

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7029

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

SECDEF WASHDC

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0431

3.O. 11652: XGDS-1

AGS: MASS, PFOR, PINS, MA, US

SUBJECT: MILITARY EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS OF MADAGASCAR

REF: TANANARIVE 0430

BEGIN SUMMARY: PREOCCUPIED WITH SECURITY, BOTH PERSONAL AND GOVERNMENTAL, MALAGASY MILITARY DIRECTORY IS URGENTLY SEEKING LIGHT ARMS AND AMMUNITION. VARYING APPROACHES HAVE BEEN MADE TO FRANCE, SOVIET UNION AND U.S. TO MEET URGENT REQUEST OF GENERAL ANDIRMAHAZO, WASHINGTON REQUESTED FURNISH ASAP BEST PRICES AND DELIVERY DATES FOR CERTAIN ARMS AND AMMUNITION UNDER MILITARY CASH SALES AUTHORIZATION TO MADAGASCAR. PROMPT U.S. SUPPORT COULD HAVE SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE ON MILITARY DIRECTORY'S ATTITUDE TOWARD U.S. INTERESTS, INCLUDING NASA STATION, DIEGO GARCIA AND FUTURE SHIP VISITS. END SUMMARY.

1. CENTRAL PREOCCUPATION OF GENERAL ANDRIAMHAZO, CHAIRMAN, MALAGASY MILITARY DIRECTORY, AT THIS JUNCTURE
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CONCERNS MADAGASCAR'S MILITARY FORCES. HE TOLD ME DURING

OUR MARCH 14 MEETING THAT HE AND HIS DIRECTORY COLLEAGUES
FEEL NEED FOR MORE EFFECTIVE PROTECTION FOR THEMSELVES
AND GOVERNMENT.

2. AS I STATED REFTTEL, THIS FEELING IS UNDERSTANDABLE
IN VIEW OF EXPERIENCES THEY HAVE JUST GONE THROUGH:
ASSASSINATION OF HEAD OF STATE/GOVERNMENT AND REBELLION
BY DISSIDENTS. THEY, AS WELL AS PUBLIC, ARE APPREHENSIVE
OVER REACTIONS TO TRIAL OF REBELS AND ALLIED POLITICIANS
WHICH MAY GET UNDER WAY THIS WEEK, AND WILL PROBABLY LAST
FOR SOME TIME. EVEN EX-PRESIDENT TSIRANANA MAY BE BROUGHT
TO TRIAL, ACCORDING TO REPORTS NOW CIRCULATING. THERE IS
CONCERN OVER REACTION OF COASTAL PROVINCES IF VERDICTS IN
TRIALS PROVE TOO SEVERE, AND OVER REACTION OF STUDENTS
AND MASSES OF YOUNG UNEMPLOYED IN TANANARIVE IF VERDICTS
CONSIDERED TOO LENIENT. COMMANDER RATSIRAKA HAS ALSO
TOLD FRENCH AMBASSADOR THAT HE HAS RECEIVED SEVERAL DEATH
THREATS, AND CONTINUED EXTENSIVE SECURITY APPARATUS
AROUND DIRECTORY INDICATES ITS MEMBERS ARE RUNNING
PERSONALLY SCARED.

3. ANDRIAMAHAZO CONSIDERS ACQUISITION OF ADDITIONAL
LIGHT ARMS AND AMMUNITION AS URGENT. HE TOLD ME ONE-
FOURTH OF COUNTRY'S AMMUNITION STOCK WAS USED UP IN
PUTTING DOWN REBELS A MONTH AGO.

4. DIRECTORY HAS TURNED FIRST TO FRANCE, MADAGASCAR'S
TRADITIONAL SOURCE OF MILITARY SUPPLIES, BUT, ACCORDING
TO ANDRIAMAHAZO, FRANCE INDICATED DELIVERY COULD BE MADE
ONLY IN 14 MONTHS. ANDRIAMAHAZO TOLD ME IT USED TO TAKE
FRANCE ONLY 6-7 MONTHS TO DELIVER IN RESPONSE TO
MALAGASY MILITARY REQUESTS, BUT THIS RAPID RESPONSE
CHANGED AFTER 1973 RENEGOTIATION OF MALAGASY-FRENCH
COOPERATION ACCORDS. ANDRIAMAHAZO THEREFORE REGRETFULLY
FEELS FRANCE STILL WANTS TO PENALIZE MALAGASY GOVERNMENT
FOR LOSS OF ITS BASES. I ASKED HIM WHETHER HE HAD SPOKEN
TO NEW FRENCH AMBASSADOR ABOUT DELIVERY.*BUT ANDRIAMAHAZO,
WITHOUT REPLYING DIRECTLY, SOMEWHAT VAGUELY INDICATED THAT
MATTER HAD BEEN HANDLED AT DIFFERENT LEVEL (PERHAPS, I
WOULD GUESS, WITH FRENCH MILITARY COUNSELOR).
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5. ANDRIAMAHAZO TOLD ME HE WAS REQUESTING INFORMATION
FROM SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABOUT TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT (EXACT
DESIGNATION HE COULD NOT RECALL) WHICH LENDS ITSELF TO
BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY TRANSPORT, CARRYING ABOUT 80
TROOPS WHEN STRIPPED DOWN. HE INDICATED HE TURNIN
CTO
SOVIETS BECAUSE HE UNDERSTANDS U.S. NO LONGER PRODUCES

DC-4'S, TYPE OF AIRCRAFT WHICH WOULD MEET MADAGASCAR'S NEEDS.

6. ANDRIAMAHAZO ASKED WHETHER U.S. COULD HELP MEET MALAGASY MKILITARY NEEDS. WHILE IT WAS CLEAR FROM CONTEXT OF TALK THAT WHAT HE AND DIRECTORY COLLEAGUES WOULD PWIKE HAVE IS MILITARY CREDIT ASSISTANCE. I REMINDED HIM THAT PRESIDENT FORD HAD IN NOV 1974 APPROVED ADDITION OF MADAGASCAR TO LIST COUNTRIES ELIGIBLE FOR MILITARY CASH PURCHASES THROUGH DOD. I ASKED HIM WHAT SPECIFIC NEEDS ARE. HE LISTED FOLLOWING: RIFLES, SUBMACHINE GUNS, REVOLVERS, BAZOOKAS, AMMUNITION FOR EACH OF THESE, GRENADES, AND CONSTRUCTION OF AMMUNITION FACTORY.

7. HE ASKED ME GET ASAP PRICES AND DELIVERY DATES FOR EACH OF ABOVE. HE POINTEDLY REMINDED ME OF DESIRABILITY FROM U.S. STANDPOINT OF HAVING FRIENDLY MADAGASCAR ASTRIDE MAIN OIL TANKER ROUTE THROUGH MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL.

8. I HANDED HIM TEXT OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S SUCCINCT AND EXCELLENT EXPLANATION IN RECENT NEWSWEEK INTERVIEW OF U.S. NEED FOR EXPANDED FACILITIES AT DIEGO GARCIA (AS CARRIED IN USIS WIRELESS FILE OF MAR 13).

9. ACTION REQUESTS:

(A) THAT WASHINGTON FURNSIH ASAP BEST POSSIBLE TERMS FOR PRICE AND DELIVERY DATES OF ITEMS LISTED PARA 6 FOR ME TO RELAY TO ANDRIAMAHAZO. I REALIZE THAT HE WAS NOT VERY SPECIFIC RE TYPES OF ARMAMENTS, AND NOT AT ALL RE QUANTITIES, BUT IT CAN BE ASSUMED AMOUNTS WOULD BE QUITE MODEST IN VIEW SIZE OF MALAGASY FORCES.

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(B) ON MUNITIONS FACTORY, ARE THERE ANY POSITIVE THOUGHTS I COULD PASS ANDRIAMAHAZO?

(C) ARE THERE ANY SURPLUS DC-4'S IN GOOD CONDITION AVAILABLE FOR SALE EITHER THROUGH DOD OR COMMERCIALLY? IF SO, WHAT WOULD E APPROXIMATE PRICE? (GOMR ALREADY HAS CAPABILITY FOR MAINTENANCE OF DC-4'S.) SINCE DATT ADVISES THAT CONVAIR 640 MIGHT ALSO FILL MALAGASY BILL, PLEASE ALSO FURNSIH PRICE AND DELIVERY DATE THEREON.

10. AS STATED REFTTEL, IT STRIKES ME AS VERY IMPORTANT TO GROWING U.S. INDIAN OCEAN INTERESTS TO HAVE FRIEND LIKE ANDRIAMAHAZO AT HEAD OF MALAGASY GOVERNMENT. TO KEEP HIM THERE, WE AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES SHALL HAVE TO SUPPORT HIM.

11. GIVEN NEUTRALITY POSITION HE TOLD ME HE WOULD FOLLOW BETWEEN GVN AND PRG ON REPRESENTATION SOUTH VIET-NAM IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (TANANARIVE'S 0432/NOTAL) IN CONTRAST TO MADAGASCAR'S PREVIOUS STRIDENTLY ONE-SIDED SUPPORT OF PRG, I THINK THAT, WITH PROPER U.S. APPROACH, WE SHALL BE ABLE TO COUNT ON ANDRIAMAHAZO'S PUBLIC NEUTRALITY AND PRIVATE SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT ON DIEGO GARCIA.

12. I DID NOT RAISE WITH HIM QUESTION OF US. NAVAL SHIP VISITS SINCE DEPT DID NOT DIRECTLY RESPOND TO MY OFFER IN TANANARIVE'S 302 TO DO SO, AND IN VIEW OF POSITION TAKEN BY STATE 47624 (NOTAL) ON MILITARY CREDIT ASSISTANCE. I STILL REMAIN PREPARED RAISE QUESTION IN THAT CONTEXT IF WASHINGTON WISHES, PARTICULARLY SINCE CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN MOZAMBIQUE AND ETHIOPIA MAY CLOSE PORTS IN THOSE COUNTRIES TO U.S. NAVAL VESSELS.

13. I BELIEVE U.S. RESPONSIVENESS TO MILITARY DIRECTORY'S PRIME INTEREST IN OBTAINING LIGHT MILITARY EQUIPMENT WOULD ALSO HAVE FAVORABLE EFFECT ON ATTITUDES OF ITS MEMBERS TOWARD NASA STATION. AS WILL BE INDICATED IN SEPTEL EBULLIENT AND NAIVE YOUNGER MEMBERS FEEL U.S. VERY GENEROUS TOWARD OTHER COUNTRIES WHERE USG HAS NO SPECIFIC INTERESTS AND INSUFFICIENTLY SO TOWARD MADAGASCAR WHERE IT WISHES MAINTAIN NASA STATION.
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